

United States Government

Department of Energy

memorandum

DATE: January 18, 1989

REPLY TO:
ATTN OF: EH-352

SUBJECT: ACTION: Transfer Responsibility for Project Indalo to Defense Programs

to: Joseph F. Salgado
Deputy Secretary

Background

On January 17, 1966, a United States (U.S.) Air Force KC-135 tanker and a B-52 bomber collided during a refueling operation. The bomber disintegrated over Palomares, Spain, carrying four nuclear weapons. Two nuclear weapons were recovered intact and the other two detonated their high explosives on impact resulting in two overlapping patterns of Plutonium-239 contamination over an agricultural area and parts of Palomares totalling about 560 acres.

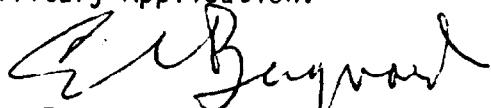
The U.S. conducted a cleanup program for the contaminated area in cooperation with the Spanish government. Subsequently, the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission entered into an agreement with the Spanish Junta de Energia Nuclear which expanded collaborative safety research efforts pursuant to the 1957 U.S.-Spanish Agreement for Cooperation in the Civil Uses of Atomic Energy. The agreement with the Junta de Energia Nuclear initiated technical and financial assistance to Spain for the conduct of a radiological monitoring and assistance program for the population of Palomares and surrounding areas. This program is known as "Project Indalo."

Discussion

Responsibility for funding and monitoring Project Indalo currently rests with the Assistant Secretary for Environment, Safety and Health (EH-1). Spain's request for funds for U.S. FY 1989 is \$605,000. However, the actual amount of funding expected by the Spanish government is likely around \$400,000. EH has provided \$200,000, thus far, in FY 1989. Based on a meeting held on November 9, 1988 with EH, Defense Programs, International Affairs, and a representative of the Spanish Government, we believe the interests of this agreement with the Spanish government would be better served if Project Indalo were transferred to the Office of Defense Programs. Similar types of activities are already funded by Defense Programs under the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Military Application (DP-20). DP-20 is in agreement with the proposed transfer of responsibilities and will provide funding starting in FY 1990.

Recommendation

That you approve the transfer of responsibility for Project Indalo to the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Military Application.



Ernest C. Baynard, III
Assistant Secretary
Environment, Safety and Health

APPROVED 

DISAPPROVED _____

DATE 1-19-88

EH:352:Tooper:eb:3-6529:11/9/88